

**RSB 403**

**Public Health Committee**

**March 12, 2010**

Senator Harris, Representative Ritter, members of the Public Health Committee, my name is Rich Pokorski and I am the Benefits Administrator with the City of Hartford. I am also a member of the Connecticut Health Care Collaborative, a dedicated coalition of employers, health plans and providers seeking to improve the quality and value of health care to the residents of Connecticut.

I am here this morning to speak against RSB 403.

An Electronic Health Information exchange is the fundamental building block of providing efficient streamlined medical care to patients in Connecticut, safely and without redundancy. A health Information exchange will facilitate a culture of sharing amongst providers in Connecticut that currently does not exist. It is a necessary precursor to providing quality care statewide

Currently, the City of Hartford's insured population is approximately 17,000 lives. The vast majority of employees, dependents and retirees use local medical providers within Hartford city limits.

Patient procedures provided at one institution, for example, St Francis Hospital, are often provided again at Hartford Hospital without one institution knowing what procedures were provided at the other. Each facility is a stones throw from the other.

Last night I sat before the Hartford City Council fielding Council persons questions to answer a question as to why our medical trend is in the double digits? Hartford's costs are approaching \$100 million or approximately 20% of the City budget.

Duplication of medical services and procedures are common and occur each day placing unnecessary financial burdens on our health care system and ultimately Connecticut taxpayers.

The bill before you is also redundancy. The redundancy of re-creating what already has been in existence since 2006, eHealth Connecticut.

I urge the Committee to work with the eHealth Connecticut and not duplicate what will ultimately further delay a necessary comprehensive Electronic Health Information Exchange.

Richard Pokorski  
Benefits Administrator  
City of Hartford